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# Security Council

Sixty-sixth year

Provisional

**6633rd meeting**

Wednesday, 19 October 2011, 10 a.m.

New York

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| *President*: | Mrs. Ogwu | (Nigeria) |
| *Members*: | Bosnia and Herzegovina | Mr. Barbalić |
| | Brazil | Mrs. Viotti |
| | China | Mr. Wang Min |
| | Colombia | Mr. Osorio |
| | France | Mr. Araud |
| | Gabon | Mr. Moungara Moussotsi |
| | Germany | Mr. Wittig |
| | India | Mr. Dushyant Singh |
| | Lebanon | Mr. Assaf |
| | Portugal | Mr. Cabral |
| | Russian Federation | Mr. Churkin |
| | South Africa | Mr. Sangqu |
| | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Irelat | Sir Mark Lyall Grant |
| | United States of America | Ms. Rice |

## Agenda

Peace and security in Africa

Piracy in the Gulf of Guinea

Letter dated 17 October 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2011/644)

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*The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.*

**Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

**Peace and security in Africa**

**Piracy in the Gulf of Guinea**

**Letter dated 17 October 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2011/644)**

**The President**: Under rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Benin to participate in this meeting.

Under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mr. Mahamane Touré, Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security of the Economic Community of West African States, and Her Excellency Mrs. Florentina Adenike Ukonga, Deputy Executive Secretary for Political Affairs of the Commission of the Gulf of Guinea.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2011/644, which contains a letter dated 17 October 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General transmitting a concept paper on the item under consideration.

I wish to welcome the presence of His Excellency Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, whom I now invite to take the floor.

**The Secretary-General**: I would like to commend Nigeria for initiating this timely discussion.

Since Under-Secretary-General Pascoe briefed the Council last August, the threat of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea has continued to grow. New cases of piracy and armed robbery aboard vessels along the West African coast are being regularly reported, with significant potential consequences for economic development and security. The threat is compounded because most Gulf States have limited capacity to ensure safe maritime trade, the freedom of navigation, the protection of marine resources and the safety and security of lives and property.

I discussed this issue with many leaders from the region and beyond during their visits to United Nations Headquarters last month. In their statements to the General Assembly, a number of heads of State highlighted the need for a concerted regional and international response. I therefore commend the States in the Gulf of Guinea and their partners for working together to tackle this security threat. Recently, Benin and Nigeria launched joint patrols to secure the waters off Benin. Similarly, Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and Sao Tome and Principe have launched a joint strategy to secure the vital interests of members of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS).

I am also encouraged by the initiatives taken by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Economic Community of Central African States to coordinate regional responses. I understand that ECOWAS plans to convene a summit of the Gulf of Guinea States and that ECCAS plans to hold an international conference. I urge the two regional organizations to work together to develop a comprehensive, integrated strategy, in close cooperation with the Commission of the Gulf of Guinea and the Maritime Organization of West and Central Africa. I also encourage them to build on the existing memorandum of understanding on maritime law enforcement developed by the Maritime Organization of West and Central Africa and the International Maritime Organization with the support of United Nations agencies. That memorandum has already been signed by 15 States from the region.

As the Council was informed in August, I have decided to deploy an assessment mission to the region in November, following a request by President Boni Yayi of Benin. Earlier this month, my Special Representative for West Africa, Mr. Said Djinnit, met with Beninese authorities, who stressed that the country's economy could be severely affected if piracy were not addressed adequately and quickly. The forthcoming United Nations assessment mission will examine the scope of the threat and the capacity of Benin and of the West African subregion as a whole to ensure maritime safety and security in the Gulf of Guinea. It will also make recommendations on antipiracy, including in the broader context of organized crime and drug trafficking.

The mission will include representatives of the Departments of Political Affairs and Peacekeeping Operations, the United Nations Office for West Africa, the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the International Maritime Organization. It will work in close consultation with national authorities, the European Union and other international partners. I will arrange to present the mission's report to the Council once I receive it.

Piracy transcends national boundaries and economic interests. It has a negative impact on West Africa's trade with the rest of the world, especially with its principal trading partners in the Americas, Asia and Europe. The recent deployment of naval vessels to support antipiracy operations in the Gulf of Guinea attests to the readiness of the region's States and their partners to address this threat. I call upon other Member States to join these efforts.

As we have learned from our experience in Somalia, we must approach the issue in a holistic manner, focusing simultaneously on security, the rule of law and development. Responses that fall short of these requirements will only exacerbate the problem. Let us therefore work together to forge a balanced and coherent strategy that addresses the roots of the problem and deterrence on land and at sea.

**The President**: I thank the Secretary-General for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Touré.

**Mr. Touré**: I am Touré Mahamane, Commissioner in charge of political affairs at the Commission of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

It is a singular honour, and indeed a privilege, for the ECOWAS Commission to be recognized on behalf of the region and given the floor to present the efforts made by the region in addressing the crippling disease of piracy, which is taking root in our region, as well as its related maritime security risk within our shores and beyond. His Excellency Mr. James Victor Gbeho, President of the ECOWAS Commission, has therefore asked me to convey his sense of gratitude for this opportunity. He has also asked me to congratulate you, Madame President, and Nigeria on your accession to the presidency of the Security Council and on the laudable agenda initiative you have put forward to bring to the forefront some of the key regional issues and challenges we face.

Allow me to report on some key initiatives undertaken by our Community to address the issue. The key recommendation of the 29th meeting of the ECOWAS Committee of Chiefs of Defence Staff, held on 4 and 5 October at the headquarters of the ECOWAS Commission in Abuja, had at its core the issue of the threats of piracy and other maritime security issues in our coastal areas and the way and means to tackle them. The 15 Chiefs of Defence Staff members and heads of navies gathered for the occasion noted that, on the shores of the Gulf of Guinea, piracy and other criminal acts were becoming prevalent, threatening local and international movements of ships and their cargo transiting Benin, Ghana, Togo, Nigeria and, lately, Guinea. This constitutes a worrisome, new and more complex development, compared to last year's attacks from the sea in Benin, Togo and Ghana. This developing insecurity impedes the efforts being made by member States and the integration process of our region.

Following the presentation made on West African maritime security and safety by experts of the navy of Nigeria, and inputs from all other members of the region's armed forces and heads of navies, the aforementioned meeting decided to expand its sub-committee on maritime security to include Benin, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo, as well as three experts on legal affairs related to maritime security.

The expanded sub-committee was tasked with studying the existing documents, including that which was developed and presented to the Chiefs of Defence Staff in Bamako in 2010, and all other documents drafted by the ECOWAS Security Division, and with looking further into other maritime security areas that had not yet been considered in order to make informed and pragmatic recommendations to the Chiefs of Defence Staff Committee within the next two months.

They had decided to look into the matter at the 27th meeting held on 14 and 15 April 2010 in Cotonou, Benin, where it was agreed that the delegations of Nigeria, Cape Verde and Ghana would conduct a survey of maritime security threats and present their findings, with specific recommendations to its next

meeting in Bamako. Thus, the issue had already been addressed in April 2010.

The aforementioned presentation was made at the 28th meeting of the Committee held in Bamako on 18 and 19 January. The Commission was tasked with developing a regional maritime governance concept that would be broken down into implementation strategies, with a subsequent plan of action. The task was immediately undertaken, and the ECOWAS Commission went to work with one of its strategic think-tank partners, which is also working on the African Union continental maritime security framework. In so doing, ECOWAS intended to be in line with African Union strategic directives on the matter.

A draft ECOWAS integrated maritime strategy, with an ECOWAS integrated maritime strategic plan, was subsequently produced. The two drafts are actually being presented to the sub-committee to which I just referred and will be examined by a meeting of ECOWAS experts on maritime security before being presented, in accordance with our rules of procedure, to the ministers of the ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council, composed of ministers of defence, foreign affairs and internal security. Once they have adopted the documents, they will present them to the Heads of State for adoption.

As I stated earlier, within the framework of the implementation of the African Union integrated maritime security framework, with the support of the Africa Center for Strategic Studies in Washington, D.C., the United States Government is facilitating a process of formalizing the existing partnership between the two regional economic communities — ECOWAS and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS). An initial brainstorming session was organized in Stuttgart, Germany, from 11 to 16 June, closely followed by a wider formal meeting in Garmisch, Germany, from 19 to 22 July. Besides the African Union, ECCAS, ECOWAS, the Maritime Organization of West and Central Africa and the Gulf of Guinea Commission, the Garmisch meeting was attended by representatives of Benin, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea, Gabon, the Gambia, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Senegal and Togo.

The Garmisch meeting established three working groups that produced a draft memorandum of understanding between ECCAS and ECOWAS on cooperation to better control and safeguard the maritime coasts of West and Central Africa, and a draft multilateral agreement on cooperation to fight illicit transnational activities within the maritime waters of Central and West Africa. That agreement is intended to formalize common approaches and share best practices among security services and agencies in charge of the daily fight against the concerned activities in the two regions. The third document adopted was an operational framework plan of action for joint activities among States members of the two regions.

Copies of these drafts have been provided to all participants to review, fine-tune and improve and to make them widely discussed nationally among all concerned stakeholders — including navies, civilian maritime stakeholders, customs, immigration services, police, gendarmerie, coastguards and so on — for their input and ownership. A second plenary meeting is slated for early January to finalize these drafts, which will be submitted to the two decision-making organs of ECCAS and ECOWAS as soon as possible, followed by a joint summit of the Heads of State and Government of the two organizations.

Our group of friends, including the United Kingdom, the United States and other partners, are contributing to build the internal capacity of the ECOWAS Commission to enable it to coordinate and add value to initiatives undertaken by member States. We are trying to avoid duplication and to make sure that we do not step on the toes of member States as we add value to their processes. The group of friends, for instance, is establishing a special maritime fund soon to be launched in the Republic of Benin, and the United States is ready to bring operational capacity in the form of shared accord programmes and information-sharing, while the United Kingdom is financing a detachment of naval officers to the ECOWAS standby force.

Meanwhile, the clock is still ticking and there is a need for immediate action to deter the ongoing attacks. Bilateral initiatives between Nigeria and Benin have already been presented by the Secretary-General. These have reduced the scourge of the attacks in our maritime waters. However, this is not enough; it needs to be extended to all countries concerned and all partners. We need more; we need international attention, recognition and support that take into account the fact

that we all — landlocked countries, partners and regional coastal members — have interests at stake.

ECOWAS praises the initiative taken by the Ambassadors of the Gulf of Guinea to draw international attention and support to the pleas of our region. Just as the Gulf of Aden has received international support, we need a political umbrella resolution of the United Nations to support our efforts. ECOWAS is wholeheartedly supporting this call, and is therefore actively engaged in this fight. We will do our share. ECOWAS calls on the Security Council to consider and adopt a resolution with regard to piracy and other related maritime criminal acts. ECOWAS suggests that, although the emphasis and focus should be on the fight against piracy, the following concerns be taken into account.

First, the littoral concerns should be extended beyond those of the Gulf of Guinea and cover all ECCAS and ECOWAS member States, including the hinterland countries with no access to the sea, such as Burkina Faso and Mali. The coasts of Cape Verde and Senegal should be covered as well.

Secondly, all other criminal acts need to be included: transnational organized criminality, all types of trafficking — in drugs, in human beings — illegal migration, terrorist acts, illegal fishing and bunkering, and toxic waste dumping, to cite just a few.

I rest my case.

**The President**: I thank General Touré for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Her Excellency Mrs. Florentina Adenike Ukonga.

**Mrs. Ukonga**: Let me begin by thanking the Nigerian presidency for inviting the Gulf of Guinea Commission (GGC) to participate in this debate and discussion on the subject of "Peace and security in Africa: piracy in the Gulf of Guinea". This issue has become a real cause for concern for the countries of the region and the rest of the world because of the increased number of acts of piracy, terrorism and robbery at sea, illicit trafficking of arms, drugs, persons and goods regularly being carried in the Gulf of Guinea region.

I bring apologies from the Executive Secretary of the Gulf of Guinea Commission, His Excellency Mr. Miguel Trovoada, who was unable to participate in this meeting due to reasons beyond his control. For me personally, it is a great honour to represent the Gulf of Guinea Commission at this very important meeting.

The Gulf of Guinea Commission welcomes this development at the Security Council and hopes it will lead to an effective collaboration to strengthen the region's defence mechanism so as to prevent its becoming another dangerous zone like the Gulf of Aden.

Among other reasons, it was precisely to forestall this nefarious development that the Gulf of Guinea Commission was established. The Treaty establishing the Gulf of Guinea Commission was first signed in July 2001 and came into effect in August 2006. Its secretariat was set up in Luanda in April 2007. The Treaty states in Article 2 that the membership of the Commission shall be "sovereign States bordering the Gulf of Guinea, parties to the present Treaty". The current members are Angola, Cameroon, the Republic of the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Nigeria, and Sao Tome and Principe. Under Article 27, countries of the Gulf of Guinea region can accede to the Treaty and be admitted as members.

Among the objectives of the Commission, as clearly stated in its Article 3, are the following: to create conditions of mutual confidence and peace and security conducive to the harmonious development of States; to promote close consultation in the exploitation of the natural resources of the Gulf, with a view to ensuring the economic development of member States and the well-being of their peoples; to harmonize the respective policies of States regarding matters of common interest, particularly matters concerning the exploitation of natural resources; to protect, preserve and improve the natural environment of the Gulf of Guinea and cooperate in the event of natural disaster; and to strengthen cooperation in communications, especially maritime communication, with a view to facilitating ties and trade among member States.

Article 5 of the Treaty clearly states the areas of cooperation:

> "In pursuit of the objectives stated above, the High Contracting Parties undertake to pool their efforts towards the harmonization of their respective policies in the areas of common interest.

> "To this end, they pledge to identify areas of common interest in the geographical area of the Gulf and map out common policies, particularly in the areas of peace and security, exploration of hydrocarbons, fisheries and mineral resources, the environment, movement of peoples and goods, development of communications, promotion of the economic development and integration of the Gulf region".

Since its inception in 2007, the Executive Secretariat of the Gulf of Guinea Commission has striven to establish contacts and mechanisms that will assist in attaining the objectives of the GGC, especially in the face of the growing importance of the region as a major supplier of marine and hydrocarbon resources to the international community, including, inter alia, the United States of America, China, France, Portugal and Spain.

The Gulf of Guinea region is an important shipping route and hub that connects the region with Europe and America. This importance has equally drawn both domestic and international attention to the need for more focused and better coordinated attention in addressing the growing challenges of piracy, especially boarded piracy, armed robbery at sea, terrorism, illicit trafficking in arms, drugs and persons, and other illegal activities like illegal, uncontrolled and undeclared fishing, among others.

In the Gulf of Guinea region we now have installed facilities for oil and gas exploration and exploitation, such as oil and gas production platforms in shallow waters, floating production systems in deep waters, drilling rigs for exploration in deep waters, and onshore and offshore storage facilities. Those represent very heavy investments, and the countries of the region and their business partners cannot afford to watch while pirates and armed robbers at sea threaten facilities that are vital to the economic survival of the countries of the region.

We also have ports for export and import in both the maritime countries and their landlocked neighbours. Ports like Douwala, Kribi, Abidjan, Cotonou and Lomé serve Chad, Mali and Burkina Faso. Any threat to these ports, through piracy and armed robbery at sea, also affects the economic activities and survival of those countries that depend on them for their imports and exports. Such criminal activities would destabilize not only the host countries but also the landlocked countries that depend on them. Therefore, the situation involves a security imperative for the development of the region.

Many of main cities and towns of the Gulf of Guinea region are found along the coast. Hence any threat to security caused by criminal activities at sea or by ecological problems will affect many, many people. The Gulf also serves as a very important route that connects the region to Europe and America. Piracy and armed robbery at sea directly affect the cost of sea transportation in the region in terms of high insurance costs and the frequency of ships.

If all these installations, facilities, populations and sea routes are threatened by piracy, armed robbery at sea and other criminal and illegal activities, the problem is massive and has regional and international consequences. How do we face the threats?

There is an urgent need for regional institutions like the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) to work with us, the Gulf of Guinea Commission, to uproot the scourge of criminalities from their respective subregions for a successful realization of their mandates. We also welcome the current initiative that is being pursued within the United Nations system.

The fundamental idea for establishing the Gulf of Guinea Commission was to provide maritime security for the region in order to protect the exploration for and exploitation of its natural resources — oil and gas and fisheries — for the development of the countries of the region and their populations. The Commission also seeks to encourage best practices in exploration for and exploitation of the natural resources of the region and to assist in case of natural and environmental disasters. The Commission is open to working in synergy with countries of the region and with ECOWAS and ECCAS to fight all the threats to the natural resources and environment of the region.

Since our inception, we organized a defence and security conference in Malabo in February 2010 with a view to charting a way forward in the search for effective and inclusive solutions to the increasing incidence of threats to security and criminal activities in the region. We also participated in the African Union-coordinated conference on maritime security in Africa. In July 2011, we were part of the ECCAS and

ECOWAS Maritime Safety and Security Seminar, on which General Touré has ably briefed the Council.

We have realized, on the basis of all those meetings, that fighting criminals at sea is a high-cost operation. Securing a maritime space the size of the Gulf of Guinea region goes beyond the capacity of any one country, as no country in the region has the human, material and financial capacity to cover it. This has created a need for cooperation and close collaboration among the countries of the region, which must work closely with external partners to establish a robust, all-inclusive regional defence mechanism that can be simultaneously deployed, coordinated and controlled at the regional level.

Fighting such illegal activities as piracy, terrorism and trafficking of all kinds — arms, persons and drugs — is not like fighting a war in the classical sense of the word, that is, with organized armies. Individual, bilateral and tripartite or quadripartite approaches will only the drive criminal actors to operate in those areas of the region that are not covered by such security arrangements. That has been the case with the arrangements made between Nigeria and Benin, as well as the efforts of Equatorial Guinea and some countries of the ECCAS region, which have also set up a quadripartite arrangement.

The war will require technological know-how, radar surveillance, equipment, good expertise for effective monitoring, and preventive deterrence.

Why is the Gulf of Guinea Commission involved? There will be a need to harmonize laws regarding illegal activities. How do we deal with piracy without the process being hijacked for the purposes of political vendettas, among other things? We need to improve the legal framework by ensuring that member States adopt laws against piracy that can be used in all countries of the region. We also need to encourage the standardization of punishments for offences at the regional level, so that one country does not sentence a convicted pirate to two years' imprisonment, while another hands out a 20-year sentence.

The Gulf of Guinea Commission is there to perform such harmonization work for member States, be they from ECOWAS or ECCAS. We currently have members from West, Central and southern Africa with shorelines on the Gulf of Guinea. It is therefore most suitable to carry out the functions of any joint mechanism that may be established to confront the dangers now shattering the peace and security of the region. We are a brand-new organization and, if politically supported and provided with the necessary human and material resources, funding and other required logistical support, we will be in a very good position to perform our functions and fulfil our mandate.

The United States of America, France and Germany have been at the forefront of efforts to provide assistance, organizing training exercises for the maritime and naval personnel of some member States. Nigeria, Benin and Cameroon have benefited from such assistance, which should be coordinated and extended to all States of the Gulf of Guinea region, under the auspices of the Gulf of Guinea Commission. It is our fervent hope that the Security Council will take these factors into consideration in the decision on a comprehensive and coordinated approach to combating piracy and other criminal activities, such as terrorism, robbery at sea, trafficking in arms, drugs and persons, as well as controlling illegal, unauthorized and undeclared fishing activities. The Gulf of Guinea Commission was established with the objective of warding off such maritime challenges and to control and contain them until they are eventually eliminated.

**The President**: I thank Mrs. Ukonga for her briefing.

I now give the floor to the members of the Council.

**Mr. Araud** (France) (*spoke in French*): I commend you, Madame President, and the Secretary-General for having taken the initiative to organize today's debate on an issue that has taken on worrisome proportions in the Gulf of Guinea and along the West African coast. Naturally, I thank the preceding speakers for their briefings and welcome the representatives of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Gulf of Guinea Commission.

We share the recognition that maritime insecurity has increased in the waters of the Gulf of Guinea. This phenomenon involves many factors. Insecurity in the Niger delta, in particular the attacks on oil installations, has now extended to neighbouring territorial waters. This transnational threat has been compounded by the rise in trafficking activity along the West African coast, for example in drugs, migrant smuggling and illegal fishing. Finally, an ever-growing

number of hostage-taking incidents and the rising costs of maritime trade and extraction activities threaten the growth, development and, in turn, stability of States on the Gulf of Guinea.

The attacks in the Gulf of Guinea have their own features, however, and cannot be compared with the rampant piracy off the Somali coast. Indeed, this insecurity affects States whose sovereignty is not in question, must be respected and should form the basis for our actions. Thus, the guiding principle of our policy should be that the Gulf of Guinea States bear the primary responsibility for ensuring security in the maritime areas under their jurisdiction.

We should operate in a framework of cooperation among the States and organizations of the region and on the basis of capacity-building for its stakeholders. That is why we fully support the proposal of President Boni Yayi of Benin to organize a regional meeting on this issue that would focus on dialogue among the concerned States and help to better distribute tasks among donors of funds and assistance.

We welcome the first instances of operational coordination between Benin, Nigeria and Cameroon, in particular the conduct of joint maritime patrols. Finally, we commend the initial efforts made by regional organizations, particularly the Economic Community of Central African States and its regional coordination centre for maritime security.

A related issue for the Gulf of Guinea countries is improving inter-ministerial cooperation, as well as adapting legislation and the institutions responsible for carrying out coast guard activities. That is the spirit of the West Africa Coast Initiative, launched in 2009 by the United Nations to strengthen local entities in the fight against trafficking on the West African coast. The Initiative brings together various sources of police, customs and judicial expertise to that end. In that connection, we could also consider extending this model from the Atlantic Arc to the eastern Gulf of Guinea.

In that regard, we welcome the Secretariat's plan to deploy a piracy assessment mission to the Gulf of Guinea. We also hope that the two United Nations offices in Dakar and Libreville can coordinate their efforts so as to regularly brief the Council on developments in piracy and efforts undertaken to fight it.

The international community can further improve its support to regional initiatives. France and the European Union have spared no effort in helping the concerned States to enhance their capacities and maritime cooperation. France's navy is using its ports of call in the region to carry out training activities. On 11 October, the authorities of Equatorial Guinea opened a new national naval academy in Bata. The academy has a regional focus and is supported by French cooperation. Finally, in September we launched a priority solidarity fund project for maritime security sector reform in the countries of the Gulf of Guinea.

The European Union is also active in this area. It funds a project aimed at establishing a regional training and information-sharing framework and at bolstering coast guard activities in the States of the Gulf of Guinea. The Strategic Sealift Contingency Planning System is focused on strengthening efforts to fight maritime trafficking and on ensuring the safety of ports and goods.

We believe that these international initiatives to support local capacities and regional coordination represent a coherent approach to preventing and effectively suppressing acts of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea. These actions should be based on the sovereignty of the States of the region, national ownership of the responses to piracy and, finally, respect for the law of the sea and freedom of navigation. We are, of course, prepared to give close and favourable consideration to a draft resolution on that basis.

**Ms. Viotti** (Brazil): Madame President, I thank you for convening this meeting on an issue of increasing concern to all of us. I also thank the Secretary-General for his presence among us today and for his remarks.

I am also grateful to the Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and to the Deputy Executive Secretary for Political Affairs of the Gulf of Guinea Commission for their presentations.

Piracy and armed robbery at sea in the Gulf of Guinea are a matter of concern, especially owing to their damaging impact on security, trade and economic activities in one of the world's emerging trade hubs. We should not forget that the security situation in West Africa was already fragile and complex, even before

the relative intensification of cases of piracy and armed robbery.

Issues such as transnational organized crime compound the challenges typical of post-conflict situations in some countries of the region, resulting in a very disquieting picture. Efforts to combat piracy and armed robbery in the Gulf of Guinea must therefore be conducted in a concerted manner with a strategy for stabilizing the region as a whole. International cooperation in this field must take into account issues related to national sovereignty and ownership, as well as regional leadership. One cannot overemphasize the importance of regional cooperation and leadership in any comprehensive strategy to address this challenge.

We praise the efforts being undertaken by the countries concerned, by ECOWAS and by the Economic Community of Central African States to combat piracy in the Gulf of Guinea.

We believe that a close dialogue between the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa, the United Nations Overseas Development Council, the United Nations Office for West Africa and the International Maritime Organization can help intensify the efforts of West African countries to combat terrorism. We encourage regional and subregional organizations and national authorities to engage in a coordinated response from the region that takes into account the specificity of West Africa and the aspirations and concerns of the countries in the region.

We concur with the Secretary-General that combating piracy must not be limited to attacking the problem at sea. Efforts must be made to address the root causes, which are usually found on shore.

In many cases, piracy and armed robbery at sea are criminal manifestations of economic hardship and lack of opportunity, posing serious challenges to effective law enforcement by coastal States. The adoption of a comprehensive strategy must therefore consider political as well as socio-economic factors. It must integrate deterrence, security, the rule of law and socio-economic development. Efforts to develop regional cooperation that supports national policies aimed at enforcing security and the rule of law must be coupled with support for economic opportunities and job creation, especially for young people.

Brazil shares with the countries in the Gulf of Guinea the same ocean, through which we received strong human and historical ties. We fully support the sovereign right of those nations to determine the best means to exploit the natural resources in their exclusive economic zones, including fisheries, in accordance with international law.

The fight against piracy and armed robbery in the Gulf of Guinea should lead to initiatives that are in full harmony with and supportive of the objectives and spirit of the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic. Brazil stands ready to contribute to that fight. We are also prepared to cooperate with the countries of the Gulf of Guinea region to stem armed robbery at sea within their national jurisdiction, in coordination with other international partners, particularly the Governments of the region, our fellow members of the Community of Portuguese Language Countries and member States of the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic.

**Mr. Churkin** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are grateful to the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, for his substantive briefing. We also welcome the participation in this meeting of representatives of the Economic Community of Western African States (ECOWAS) and the Gulf of Guinea Commission.

The Russian Federation is seriously concerned about the recent upsurge in armed robbery at sea and the seizure of vessels for ransom as well as of high-value freight off the west coast of Africa.

On 8 October, 70 nautical miles south of Lagos, the German tanker *Cape Bird* was seized; it was freed on 14 October. Russian Federation citizens were among the crew taken hostage. That was not the first case where Russian sailors suffered acts of piracy in that subregion. We believe that such acts are serious crimes and that the security of people, including Russian citizens, is at risk, and we therefore intend to give this issue high priority.

There were isolated attacks on vessels in the Gulf of Guinea in the past, but this year piracy and armed robbery at sea off the coasts of Ghana, Togo, Benin and Nigeria have shown all the hallmarks of a well-functioning criminal enterprise that threatens the security of maritime shipping and the economic well-being of coastal States.

Based on information from the International Maritime Organization, since the beginning of this year

there have been upwards of 30 incidents in the Gulf of Guinea. We believe that the real figure is much higher. In comparison, in 2010 there was not a single serious attack.

In addition, the character of these acts of piracy is changing. Whereas in the past there were minor robberies and the seizure of small vessels and small quantities of freight, today we are seeing large-scale robberies carried out by well-equipped groups of pirates. In addition, piracy in the Gulf of Guinea is becoming increasingly violent. We must also now consider the possibility of links between piracy and other branches of organized crime, including drug trafficking in Western Africa.

The situation in that region continues to be a growing concern for shipping companies and the insurance industry. Most of the attacks are carried out close to shore, within the territorial waters of coastal States. That demands appropriate measures of response, mainly from the affected countries of the region, in order to enhance the security of shipping.

We must step up control of the coast by improving coast guard services and providing them with the latest technical equipment. We must build on successful experience in combating piracy in other regions of the world's oceans, based on the valuable work of the International Maritime Organization in that arena. It is clear that the primary burden for dealing with the threat of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea lies with the States of the region. However, they require significant international support in their struggle.

We welcome the organizational and practical steps adopted by the countries of the region, either individually or within the context of regional groupings, in particular ECOWAS, the Economic Community of Central African States and the Gulf of Guinea Commission, aimed at developing effective ant-piracy measures. We also welcome the idea of holding a subregional conference on the problem.

We must not underestimate the risk of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea. If effective measures are not taken to address it now, the situation could get out of control in the near future. In that case, more resources and additional effort will be required to deal with it. The aim should be for the countries of West and Central Africa, with the support of the international community, to implement a combined anti-piracy strategy and a coordinated security system for shipping in the Gulf of Guinea.

Given Russia's own experience in this area, we are ready also to consider possible cooperative support to those countries and regional groupings.

**Mr. Cabral** (Portugal): I would like to begin by thanking Nigeria for its initiative in convening this timely debate and the Secretary-General for his useful introductory remarks. I would also like to thank today's briefers, General Touré, from the Economic Community of Western African States (ECOWAS), and Mrs. Adenike, from the Gulf of Guinea Commission. Their valuable presentations offer us a perspective from the areas affected by the phenomenon of piracy. The views and information shared are crucial for a clearer understanding of the dimensions of the problem, as well as of what we can do collectively to address it.

Portugal fully shares the concerns expressed here by the briefers and those contained in the concept notes circulated by the Nigerian Presidency (S/2011/644). Piracy in the Gulf of Guinea is not a new phenomenon; however, in recent years it has grown more frequent, more sophisticated in its techniques and more violent. Its effects are felt far beyond the mere realm of security, because it disrupts trade and economic activity that are vital for coastal States. Most importantly, piracy affects countries with very different levels of institutional capacity to address the problem and cannot be solved by isolated measures on the part of individual States.

As we have previously remarked when discussing the threat of organized crime in West Africa, of which piracy in the Gulf of Guinea is clearly another ramification, success in tackling the problem in one country can easily create additional pressure on that country's neighbours. We are therefore glad to see that there is a growing consensus on the need for a region-wide strategy to fight piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, based first and foremost on the efforts of regional bodies.

Let me add a few thoughts on the role of the international community, and of the United Nations in particular, in contributing to regional efforts. First, it is very positive that the main regional organizations — not only ECOWAS and the Economic Community of Central African States, but also the Gulf of Guinea Commission and the Maritime Organization of West

and Central Africa — are paying attention to addressing the problem of piracy. To be effective, those distinct efforts must be coordinated, respecting each organization's particular area of competence. The United Nations can play a central role in ensuring the coherence and overall coordination of those initiatives, particularly considering that these organizations have different sets of members, and none of them covers all the countries potentially affected by this threat.

We should also try to make good use of existing mechanisms. For example, the ECOWAS regional action plan for organized crime is a reference framework for initiatives in this area and should be enlarged to cover the threat of piracy as well. The West Africa Coast Initiative, which encourages the pooling of national knowledge and resources, could also add the issue of piracy to its areas of activity. The same applies to the original programmes for West Africa of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The best practices of individual countries and bilateral assistance programmes already in place should be shared with regional partners.

The role of the international community in encouraging and supporting region-led efforts is instrumental; hence the relevance of this meeting today, which we once again thank Nigeria for its initiative in convening. In this context, I would also like to underline the contribution and efforts of the European Union in this particular field. Portugal also attaches due importance to this issue in the framework of its strong bilateral relations with many countries of that region, particularly those in the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries.

The international community should also reinforce regional initiatives and capacities by contributing to a better understanding of the phenomenon. As the concept note recognizes, many piracy incidents go unreported. We have very little information about the link between acts of piracy and organized crime onshore. We are therefore very supportive of the idea of a United Nations assessment mission, with the participation of UNODC and the International Maritime Organization, to those countries in the region most affected by piracy, in order to give us a clearer picture. We also expect the United Nations Office for West Africa and the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa, in their future reports to the Council, to give more extensive coverage to the problem of piracy and their involvement with national and regional authorities in combating it.

As we have learned from the situation in the Indian Ocean, piracy is a complex phenomenon that requires our regular and close attention. Encouraging better capacities, knowledge and coordination among the actors in the fight against piracy will result in a decisive contribution by the Security Council to regional stability and development.

**Mr. Osorio** (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me first to thank you, Madame President, for your initiative in holding a briefing on peace and security in Africa and the matter of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea. I would also like to commend the important contributions made by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, whose presence here we appreciate; the Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Mr. Mahamane Touré; and Her Excellency Mrs. Florentina Adenike Ukonga, Deputy Executive Secretary for Political Affairs of the Gulf of Guinea Commission.

International statistics suggest that attacks and armed robbery at sea off the coast of West Africa, particularly in the Gulf of Guinea, have increased in recent years, affecting the security of maritime navigation in the subregion and having a harmful impact on trade and other economic activities. This obliges us to conduct a detailed analysis of the best ways whereby the international community can help the Gulf of Guinea coastal States exercise their sovereign responsibility both to provide security to maritime traffic in their territories and jurisdictional waters, and to combat acts of piracy in the subregion, where appropriate.

In addressing these problems, we must be able to rely on precise, detailed and verifiable information on the scope, modalities and specific areas in which the incidents reported in the region occurred, as well as on the deficiencies and needs of the national authorities and subregional organizations in responding to these illegal acts. A clear picture of the nature of the phenomenon we are facing, and what dealing with it requires, will enable the international community to participate in developing initiatives tailored to each case and in directing its assistance to the areas that the countries of the region have designated priorities.

To those ends, the United Nations Charter and international law are essential foundations for our discussion, since they offer a legal and conceptual framework on which to base our initiatives. The 1982 Convention on the Law of the Sea and the 1998 Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation defined the scope of application and the measures that the international community can take in helping to develop and implement strategies to combat armed robbery at sea and piracy in the Gulf of Guinea.

It is crucial that we keep leadership and the lead role in the hands of the States concerned in the fight against these crimes, without shirking the international community's duty to increase its cooperation and technical assistance in improving national, regional and global capacities to overcome legal and security deficiencies relating to maritime navigation. The United Nations, through its Department of Political Affairs, its regional offices for West and Central Africa, its Office for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, together with the International Maritime Organization and INTERPOL, should assist the national authorities, ECOWAS, the Economic Community of Central African States and the Gulf of Guinea Commission in establishing and building their capacity to respond to these multiple issues.

Finally, we believe that the international community must support efforts to promote effective capacity-building for preventing, combating and eradicating these illegal acts. We should focus on exchanging information and intelligence, disseminating best practices, establishing technical assistance programmes for improving national legislation and developing action plans for the region, creating and disseminating guidelines for timely and coordinated responses, and considering the possibility of setting up mechanisms to finance efforts to enhance national and regional capacities and institutions. The United Nations should make an urgent and permanent commitment to providing the assistance and capacity needed to develop a regional strategy that will ensure that this criminal practice does not spread to other regions or affect navigation in international waters.

**Mr. Wang Min** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I would first like to thank Nigeria for having taken the initiative to convene this meeting on piracy in the Gulf of Guinea. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General, Mr. Touré and Mrs. Ukonga for their briefings.

I would like to emphasize the following points. First, the United Nations should pay particular attention to piracy in the Gulf of Guinea. In recent years, acts of piracy there have increased; there have been more attacks, and the scope of those attacks has worsened, as has the violence involved. This is a serious threat to economic activity in the Gulf of Guinea and to shipping security. It is therefore also a threat to peace and security in the region. The coastal States, regional organizations and the international community must become fully aware of the seriousness of the problem of piracy and take timely measures to combat it and prevent a worsening of the situation.

Secondly, to deal with piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, both underlying and ongoing causes must be addressed. The international community and the countries of the region must focus on the causes of piracy and adopt an integrated strategy to effectively maintain peace and stability in the countries of the region, based upon capacity-building aimed at ensuring peace and dealing with the economic situation of the countries in the region. The international community must play an active and constructive role in that context.

Thirdly, the coastal States and international and regional organizations must scale up coordination. Given the many countries along the Gulf of Guinea coast, combating piracy will require the efforts of all States. China pays tribute to the joint patrols launched by Nigeria and Benin and welcomes the efforts of the Economic Community of West African States, the Gulf of Guinea Commission and other regional organizations to formulate a regional strategy to combat piracy.

It is our hope that the countries concerned and international organizations will enhance efforts to coordinate their work. Assistance must also be provided to combat piracy. China calls upon the international community to provide the necessary support to coastal States and regional organizations by sharing information and experience and providing technical assistance and capacity-building.

China welcomes the decision of the Secretary-General to send a fact-finding mission to the Gulf of Guinea and hopes that the he will be able to brief the Security Council in a timely manner.

**Mr. Singh** (India): First of all, I would like to join others in placing on record our appreciation to the Nigerian delegation for organizing this meeting on an issue that is becoming a major threat to maritime navigation, trade and economic activities in the Gulf of Guinea. I also would like to thank the Secretary-General and the representatives of the Economic Community of West African States and the Gulf of Guinea Commission for their comprehensive briefings. Their participation in the meeting today is important, for the problem of piracy and maritime robbery is regional and can be addressed only through the cooperation of regional stakeholders.

Piracy off both of the coasts of Africa has become a serious obstacle to the development aspirations of the region. The increasing attacks on shipping vessels off the western coast of Africa, particularly in the Gulf of Guinea, are affecting the oil industry in the region — which includes Nigeria, Angola and Equatorial Guinea, the largest oil producers in sub-Saharan Africa. That compounds the problems in the region, which already faces others such as the illegal narcotics trade and the proliferation of small arms.

India has been at the forefront of efforts to highlight the menace of piracy off the coast of Somalia, stressing the urgent need for the international community to work towards a comprehensive counter-piracy strategy. India is also concerned about the new surge in piracy and maritime robbery in the Gulf of Guinea. While the two situations are different in proportion at this stage, it is quite possible that the failure of the international community to act decisively against piracy off the coast of Somalia could have spawned a new surge in piracy in the Gulf of Guinea.

A number of unemployed youth have become attracted to the business of piracy and maritime robbery, which they find involves low cost and risk, but yields high returns. The problem in the countries of West Africa, therefore, is fast assuming the proportions of an organized cartel. Societal issues of poverty, unemployment, political instability, the lack of appropriate naval infrastructure and weak prosecution systems have not helped counter-piracy efforts.

While incidents of piracy and maritime robbery in the Gulf of Guinea are considered underreported by many, they have already escalated from low-level armed robberies to hijackings, cargo thefts and large-scale robberies. Pirates have also shown a propensity to employ torture and other forms of physical violence and abuse against sailors and crew members.

In view of the increasing incidents, there is a need to pay special attention to the safety, security and well-being of the seafarers taken as hostage and to ensuring their speedy release by appropriate means. Also, given the large investments made by countries in the region's oil industry and the increasing oil exports from the region, there is an urgent need to act now before the problem assumes an even greater intensity and proportion.

It is therefore time to focus proper attention on the problem. We are happy to note that countries in the region, clearly aware of the problem, have launched efforts to collectively address the issue. India would like to commend Nigeria for taking a lead in that initiative, along with other affected countries in the region.

We are also glad that the Security Council has been seized of the matter and that its deliberations and press releases in the past few months have helped to increase awareness. Concrete action needs to be taken now. In that connection, it is important that countries in the region work together on joint counter-piracy efforts, including sharing information and capacity-building related to their naval forces. In addition, strengthened legal systems to ensure effective and expeditious prosecution are also critical. We welcome the decision to convene a special meeting in Equatorial Guinea of the members of the Gulf of Guinea Commission to discuss this issue.

The international community, led by the United Nations, should help those regional efforts by providing resources for capacity-building of coast guards and naval forces. That would greatly help in effectively patrolling the seas and carrying out surveillance along the coast.

United Nations agencies in the region, particularly the United Nations Office for West Africa, the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the International Maritime Organization, have an important role to play in regional counter-piracy efforts, as well as in addressing the related problems of terrorism, illicit trafficking in drugs and the proliferation of small arms, as all those issues conspire together to destabilize the region. To that end, we welcome the upcoming visit of the United Nations assessment

mission to examine the situation and explore modalities for United Nations support.

In conclusion, India stands ready to contribute to international efforts aimed at increasing effective cooperation among States to tackle the threat of piracy and armed robbery at sea and at ensuring the safety and release of hostages taken by pirates.

**Sir Mark Lyall Grant** (United Kingdom): I should like to thank the Secretary-General for his briefing this morning, as well as General Touré of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and Mrs. Ukonga of the Gulf of Guinea Commission. The United Kingdom welcomes this discussion of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, and I am grateful to you, Madam President, for the leadership you have shown in bringing this issue to the Council.

The threat that piracy and maritime robbery in the Gulf of Guinea poses to the lives of crews and the ongoing threat it poses to safe trade within the region deserve our attention. The United Kingdom is concerned by the increasing number of attacks and the level of violence linked to piracy and maritime armed robbery in the Gulf of Guinea. While attacks are currently focused on the waters of Nigeria and Benin, the geographical scope of the attacks is expanding, posing a greater threat to the region as a whole. Recent reporting suggests that there have been approximately 27 reported piracy attacks this year, although many analysts think that as few as one in 10 attacks is actually reported.

The severity of the issue clearly calls for a coordinated response. We therefore welcome the initiatives of regional States, especially the joint patrolling recently agreed by Nigeria and Benin. Strong and robust action by military and law-enforcement agencies is necessary to counter the threat of piracy.

This is a valuable opportunity to hear how countries in the region are taking steps to tackle the problem and to consider how best we can support their efforts. Attacks by pirates not only endanger lives but, additionally, are beginning to jeopardize oil and gas exports, as well as dramatically increasing insurance premiums, which is raising the cost of doing business across the region.

It is therefore in the interests of all regional partners to work closely with regional bodies such as Economic Community of Central African States and ECOWAS to ensure that action is taken now. We would encourage more States to follow the examples of Nigeria and Benin and undertake joint maritime patrols with their neighbours and regional partners to collectively suppress all illicit maritime activity.

Piracy in the Gulf of Guinea is a different model to the one used by Somali pirates. Attacks in the Gulf of Guinea have often been more violent, with the main focus on offloading and selling their cargo. However, drawing on lessons learned from the international community's experience in countering piracy off East Africa will be very valuable. Good examples from that experience include the role of information stations and coastal law-enforcement agencies, which have together warned and steered ships away from potential attacks.

Regional action requires international support, and the United Kingdom strongly supports the efforts of the International Maritime Organization and the Maritime Organization of West and Central Africa (MOWCA) to increase the integration of regional coast guard functions through closer coordination and information-sharing.

In an effort to boost regional capability and develop robust and coordinated maritime security, the United Kingdom will continue to provide ongoing regional maritime support. As General Touré pointed out, in the past year the United Kingdom, in support of the African Partnership Station, has provided maritime security, support and training to Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire, and has made a commitment to participate in future regional capacity initiatives.

The United Kingdom is also supporting the European Union's work with Cape Verde, Ghana and Senegal on a project called SEACOP, which develops national capacity to set up specialist intelligence and investigation units located in seaports or sensitive coastal areas to reinforce seaport capacities, develop regional maritime intelligence and organize regional training. We will also be supporting Ghana, with the assistance of the shipping industry, in hosting a maritime trade information-sharing centre that will provide information and warnings to commercial shipping travelling in the Gulf of Guinea. The United Kingdom's Maritime Trade Organization helped fight piracy off the coast of Somalia by carrying out a similar function.

In conclusion, the first step to stopping piracy in the Gulf of Guinea must come from the regional countries working more closely together. The recent conference in Germany, which brought together representatives of the African Union, the International Maritime Organization, MOWCA and the maritime representatives of countries in the economic communities of West and Central African States to discuss this issue, was a useful way of bringing together all those who must work collectively to address this problem. It is now essential that an active regional approach be pursued. For our part, we are ready to engage on a Security Council resolution which supports this regional approach.

**Mr. Sangqu** (South Africa): I would like to take this opportunity once again to thank you, Madam President, and your delegation for having organized this important debate. We thank the representatives of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Economic Community of Central African States and the Gulf of Guinea Commission for their respective briefings. The briefings allowed us to have a better and deeper appreciation of the nature and implications of piracy in the region. Effective action to combat piracy in the Gulf of Guinea has been hampered partly by a lack of information regarding the extent of the problem. We also wish to thank the Secretary-General for his remarks today.

While international focus has been principally on piracy off the coast of Somalia, it should not be forgotten that piracy affects other regions of the world, including waters off the coast of West Africa, in particular the Gulf of Guinea. Like others, we remain concerned at the risk to the region's security posed by piracy. The increase in the number of attacks in the past year and the violent nature of those attacks has brought greater attention to the growing problem of piracy off the coast of West Africa. South Africa is concerned that those attacks pose a threat to navigation, security and the economic development of States in that region. We commend the efforts already undertaken by the African States, including the joint patrols by Nigeria and Benin, in the region. Nonetheless, more needs to be done, and the international community's collective support is required.

In the search for a tailor-made solution that fits the threats specific to the Gulf of Guinea, it has to be acknowledged that the countries of the region will need adequate resources and technical capacities to address the scourge of piracy. We stand ready to assist to the best of our capabilities those countries that are most affected by piracy in the region.

We call upon other States and organizations to offer whatever assistance they can, including through the provision of financial and technical assistance. We welcome the initiative taken by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the United Nations Office in West Africa and the International Maritime Organization to set up a mission to assess the region's capacity to combat piracy, and hope that this spirit of partnership will contribute to the eradication of piracy.

We are encouraged in this regard by the intention of the countries of the region to convene a summit of heads of State and Government in order to find a comprehensive response to the problem. We are confident that this summit will develop an all-inclusive strategy which aims to bolster efforts in the fight against piracy and armed robberies in the Gulf of Guinea. We welcome the efforts made by ECOWAS members to discuss the creation of regional mechanisms to tackle piracy in the region.

It is also important to acknowledge and emphasize the importance of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which remains the framework for dealing with piracy on the high seas, including the exclusive economic zone. The relevant provisions of the Convention, including articles 101, 105 and 107, grant all States the right to exercise universal jurisdiction. While States have the sovereign right to legislate, more international assistance is needed to support all efforts to fight the scourge of piracy. All of this makes it necessary for all States, not only those affected, to adopt legislation to deal with piracy and to implement such legislation.

**Mr. Barbalić** (Bosnia and Herzegovina): Allow me to thank you, Madam President, for having organized this important briefing on piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, which can be described as a serious threat to peace and stability in West Africa. I should like also to thank the Secretary-General for his briefing as well as General Mahamane Touré, Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security of the Economic Community of West African States, as well as Her Excellency Ms. Florentina Adenike Ukonga, Deputy Executive Secretary for Political Affairs of the Gulf of Guinea Commission.

Bosnia and Herzegovina notes with concern that the pirate attacks in the Gulf of Guinea are a growing threat that has a negative impact on the security, stability and economies of West African States. We note the efforts made by affected countries and regional organizations to tackle the problem. We strongly encourage the further continuation and enhancement of regional efforts to combat this problem. In that context, we welcome the plan to organize a summit of Gulf of Guinea heads of State to discuss a regional response to this matter.

We also underline the importance of international assistance in combating the challenge of piracy and armed robbery at sea. We therefore call upon the international community to continue to extend its support for that goal, as well as to support the efforts of States and regional organizations in building the capacity necessary to address piracy.

Although differences between piracy off the coast of Somalia and pirate attacks in the Gulf of Guinea are evident, lessons learned should be used to prevent the escalation of this negative trend. We share the view of other members that root causes must be addressed along the coast, starting with poverty and the lack of opportunities for young people.

Bosnia and Herzegovina welcomes the decision of the Secretary-General to deploy an assessment mission in November to gather more information regarding piracy in the Gulf of Guinea and to investigate further possibilities for collaboration with regional organizations and States concerned to address the problem. Bearing in mind the linkage between piracy, organized crime and drug trafficking — which have a direct negative impact on peace and stability — we share the view that there is a need for a comprehensive strategy. Of course, an important part of such a strategy is bringing to justice those who finance, plan, organize and execute pirate attacks and armed robbery at sea. In that regard, information sharing is essential.

Finally, we would like to emphasize the importance of close cooperation among the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa, the United Nations Office for West Africa, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the International Maritime Organization, within the framework of their current respective mandates on this issue.

**Mr. Wittig** (Germany): Let me thank the Nigerian presidency for putting on the agenda the issue of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea. I also want very much to thank the Secretary-General and the representatives of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Gulf of Guinea Commission for their presentations.

Piracy in the Gulf of Guinea has been on the rise and is affecting economic and security interests in the region and beyond. Early and coordinated actions are needed in order to avoid an escalation to similar levels as those off the Horn of Africa.

We welcome the initiatives taken so far by different actors in the Gulf of Guinea and by international partners. Those measures are very important steps to enhance regional joint anti-piracy efforts, information sharing and capacity building. Regional organizations, such as ECOWAS, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and the Gulf of Guinea Commission have a decisive role to play.

In 2010, the European Union (EU) began to assess the situation with regard to maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea. Current EU projects at the early stage of implementation aim at capacity-building support for ECOWAS and ECCAS, in cooperation with the International Maritime Organization. Germany is pleased to be associated with efforts to assist the Gulf of Guinea Commission.

A dual approach should be followed in order to increase maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea. First, the maritime security capacities of the States in the Gulf of Guinea — that is, coast guards, navies, et cetera — should be strengthened. In doing so, the capacity to actively fight piracy should be a priority. Secondly, a holistic concept of maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea should be developed. Such a concept should consider the questions of preventing and deterring piracy, as well as the legal and political framework to deal with pirates.

In that regard, lessons can be learned from the fight against piracy off the coast of Somalia. The same goes for best practices with regard to self-protection measures for the shipping industry. However, the success of that approach will very much depend upon the capacity of affected States to ensure the rule of law and effective security forces and institutions.

We welcome the intention of the Secretary-General to deploy an assessment mission to examine the situation and explore possible options for United Nations support. We look forward to the results of the mission as a possible basis for further action.

We are confident that the combined expertise of different United Nations offices and agencies — such as the United Nations Office for West Africa, the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the International Maritime Organization — can be used effectively to assist in the fight against piracy in the Gulf of Guinea. In order to enhance the effectiveness of the different anti-piracy efforts, we encourage further coordination and exchange of information among all partners engaged in this area.

**Ms. Rice** (United States of America): Let me join others in thanking you, Madame President, for convening this important meeting. We would also like to convey our gratitude to the Secretary-General, Mr. Touré and Mrs. Adenike Ukonga for their very important briefings.

Today's meeting is both timely and important. In recent years, the number of reported incidents of piracy and maritime armed robbery in the Gulf of Guinea has increased alarmingly. While attacks are under-reported, we do know that in this year alone at least two dozen maritime armed robbery and piracy attacks were reported in the Gulf of Guinea, with a particularly sharp increase in incidents off the coast of Benin. Such attacks, whether within territorial waters or on the high seas, threaten regional and maritime security and the safety of seafarers, as well as impede economic growth across West and Central Africa. Maritime attacks have included assaults on coastal cities, and even an attack on the presidential palace in Malabo, the coastal capital of Equatorial Guinea. Illicit maritime trafficking in goods, drugs and persons also undermines governance and unravels the fabric of fragile societies.

The impact of maritime crime on local economies is substantial. It has become a crippling problem in countries including Benin, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Ghana and Nigeria. Militants in the Niger delta have demonstrated the capacity to reach offshore oil facilities in recent years, threatening the secure supply of the over 2 million barrels of oil that emanate from that region every day. The increasing frequency of attacks against the shipping sector in Benin is a particular concern.

Beyond its impact on the oil sector, by one estimate attacks on offshore oil facilities result in an estimated loss of $2 billion annually to the broader regional economy, including the fishing industry and commercial shipping. That is obviously a very high price for a region with urgent development needs and fragile economies.

In early August, only 50 ships were at anchor in Cotonou's port, instead of the usual 150. Benin has experienced a dramatic drop in the customs fees and other port revenues on which the Government relies for 55 per cent of its revenue.

There are important differences, thus far, between piracy and maritime attacks in the Gulf of Guinea and those along the coast of Somalia. In the Gulf of Guinea attackers primarily seek to steal valuable commodities, which are often sold illicitly in West and Central Africa. Cargo and valuables are what the attackers typically want, not necessarily the ships themselves or the crew and passengers. Somali pirates usually strike on the high seas, and then utilize safe havens on shore to hold ships and people hostage. In the Gulf of Guinea criminals often operate closer to shore, usually with the goal of robbery rather than hostage-taken. They have mainly left crews and passengers unharmed.

Clearly, the primary responsibility for patrolling and security territorial waters rests with individual countries in the region. Each country should make maritime security a national priority, both as a matter of law enforcement and to enable continued economic development. Yet the international community, too, must do more to support regional and national efforts. The United States supports the work of the Economic Community of West African States and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) to strengthen coordination among countries in the region.

Since 2007 the United States has provided approximately $35 million in coastal radar, equipment, boats and associated maritime security training to our West and Central African partners. The United States is committed to collaborating with our African and other international friends to build national and regional maritime capacity through programmes like the Africa Partnership Station and the African Maritime Law Enforcement Partnership.

Earlier this year, in exercises hosted by ECCAS, the United States Navy worked with Belgium, Cameroon, France, Gabon, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, the Republic of Congo and Spain to help local forces improve their capacity to counter illicit maritime activities. Those and other Africa Partnership Station activities will strengthen regional maritime coordination and improve maritime safety and security in Africa. Those are just a few examples of international support to the region's maritime security efforts.

In order to strengthen international assistance in the region, we would all benefit from additional insight and information. The United States therefore welcomes the Secretary-General's decision to send a fact-finding team to the Gulf of Guinea. We look forward to receiving his report. We hope it will contain important insights about how to build national and regional capacity to counter maritime security threats and strengthen the maritime sector as a whole.

The scourge of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea has threatened the economies, Governments and peoples of the region for far too long. Now it is time for the States of the region, with the close support of the international community, to work together to address the threat effectively.

**Mr. Assaf** (Lebanon) (*spoke in Arabic*): First of all, I would like to thank you, Madame President, for having convened this meeting. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his important briefing, as well as Mr. Touré and Mrs. Ukonga for their statements.

We are seriously concerned about the increasing number of acts of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea and about drug trafficking, hostage-taking and armed robbery along the coast of that region. We also condemn those crimes, which destabilize the region and undermine security. They also threaten commercial shipping and have a negative impact on economic development. The losses from such acts are huge, especially when it comes to the oil, fishing and shipping industries.

Lebanon believes that piracy is evolving, thereby requiring an effective and swift response at the national, regional and international levels. At the national level, we emphasize the need to support countries in the region to build their own capacities and modernize their equipment, so as to enable them to eliminate piracy. We also call for harmonization between domestic and international law in combating piracy so that countries of the region can capture pirates and armed bandits, bring them to justice and imprison the guilty.

At the regional level, we welcome the joint sea patrols by States of the region in the Gulf of Guinea to combat piracy, as well as the information exchange among those countries. We urge them to increase that cooperation and coordination. We also stress the importance of regional organizations, such as the Economic Community of West African States, the African Union and the Economic Community of Central African States, establishing a regional plan to combat piracy in the Gulf of Guinea by instituting a joint protection force. That would entail protecting the countries' territorial waters and cooperation with the United Nations Regional Offices for Central and West Africa.

At the international level, we should be guided by international law, which provides the necessary legal framework to deal with piracy. We would like to thank the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime for placing its expertise at the disposal of the countries of the region. We call on the international community and the Security Council to support plans by those countries to establish joint protection forces to patrol their coastlines.

We welcome the Secretary-General's decision to deploy an assessment mission to the Gulf of Guinea to explore the various options available to the United Nations to combat piracy.

Finally, would like to reiterate what we have said in the past on the subject of piracy in Somalia. We believe that dealing with the underlying causes of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea in the longer term will require that we address the economic and social problems that countries face, set up sustainable development programmes and combat poverty and unemployment. We also need to engage in capacity-building for Government institutions, including coast guards, so that countries of the region can control their territorial waters and ensure a better future for their people.

**Mr. Moungara Moussotsi** (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I would like to thank Nigeria for having inscribed on the agenda the important issue of maritime piracy in the Gulf of Guinea. I also wish to

thank the Secretary-General and the representatives of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Gulf of Guinea Commission for their important contributions to today's debate.

The region of the Gulf of Guinea, which includes my country, has the two-fold advantage of being rich in fishing and oil resources as well as an area of great geopolitical and geostrategic importance. Recent events in the Gulf of Guinea — especially in Benin and Nigeria — show the point to which piracy has become a real threat to international peace and security.

My country welcomes the constant efforts of Nigeria in the fight against this phenomenon in the Gulf of Guinea region. We support the initiatives in that regard undertaken by Benin and your own country, Madame President, including the upcoming summit to develop a regional strategy to combat piracy in the region.

Given the ongoing nature of the piracy phenomenon, we support the Secretary-General's plan to deploy an assessment mission to the region to explore the possibility of a United Nations role.

I should now like to turn to Gabon's efforts in the fight against piracy, efforts at the regional level and efforts at the international level.

At the national level, Gabon is party to the principal legal instruments pertaining to maritime piracy, specifically, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation, signed in Rome in 1988, including its additional Protocol. Moreover, my country has participated in enforcing those legal instruments and their means of suppressing maritime piracy.

At the regional level, there is a need to strengthen inter-State cooperation in the fight against maritime piracy; while, at the international level, there is a need to strengthen legal instruments and the means of enforcing them. In that regard, Gabon would like to highlight the efforts made by regional economic communities, namely, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and ECOWAS. In Central Africa, for instance, Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea and my own country signed a technical agreement in May 2009 on carrying out regular joint patrols in the three areas under maritime surveillance identified by ECCAS. Likewise, a mechanism for combating maritime piracy has been put in place in the subregion.

I also support the idea that the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa and the United Nations Office in West Africa cooperate closely in the fight against piracy in the Gulf of Guinea.

For its part, the African Union has put together a comprehensive regional programme to combat maritime crime. As part of its implementation, with the support of the Africa Center for Strategic Studies and the United States Africa Command, a process has been launched to bring the two regional centres into closer communication in order to strengthen their cooperation in the fight against, and eradication of, the threats related to maritime activities.

At the international level, the meetings among the countries of the Gulf of Guinea held in Stuttgart and Garmisch, Germany, in June and July are also part of such efforts.

My delegation would like to take this opportunity to welcome the military assistance that the United States, France and Germany have provided to the countries of the Gulf of Guinea in their fight against this phenomenon.

Thanks to these partnerships, regional cooperation has already produced noteworthy results. However, that cooperation should be strengthened in terms of training for coast guard units, financing for equipment and infrastructure, and bolstering information and cooperation mechanisms between existing regional forces.

Many countries, including mine, believe that while these conventional mechanisms are important, they do not take into account the specificities of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea. It is for this reason that Gabon has sought to work with other Gulf of Guinea countries to strengthen national and subregional measures to combat maritime piracy, as well as the confidence-building measures undertaken in the context of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa.

At the international level, Gabon supports the drafting and adoption of a general convention against maritime piracy. The effectiveness of such an instrument would strengthen the mechanisms already in place in this area.

**The President**: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Nigeria.

First, I want to thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, not only for his briefing this morning but especially for his abiding interest in the subject under review. My appreciation also goes to Mr. Touré of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Commission and Ambassador Adenike Ukunga of the Commission of the Gulf of Guinea for their very lucid and detailed briefings.

The challenges of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea are enormous and daunting, with devastating consequences for the economies of the countries of the subregion. These reprehensible acts are unremitting and continue to hamper maritime navigation, consequently threatening the stability and security of coastal countries and beyond.

We now know that perpetrators are motivated by access to crude oil and that many of them are also involved in the trafficking of illicit goods and small arms and light weapons. Their activities have led to an escalation in criminal acts, including armed attacks on financial institutions along coastal areas. In convening this briefing, our intention was to build on the momentum already generated through the Council's statement of 30 August and to underpin the resolve of the international community to tackle the problem.

As has been aptly acknowledged by speakers before me this morning, Nigeria is already working with bilateral and multilateral partners to find solutions to these challenges, One of these initiatives is my country's cooperative arrangement with the Republic of Benin to confront piracy, in the spirit of collective security. Our joint patrol mission incorporates a fleet of armed vessels to patrol our territorial waters and disrupt the activities of pirates. For an initial period of six months, a fleet of six Nigerian vessels and helicopters will work with the Beninese navy to deter piracy and counter the threat that these criminals pose. The recent call by ECOWAS to incorporate elements from all of the coastal areas and beyond in the patrol and interdiction effort is very pertinent. Obviously, this problem cannot be resolved by two nations alone; it is a collective responsibility. For this reason, we eagerly look forward to the forthcoming summit of the heads of State of the region to devise a comprehensive strategy to address this important threat.

We are nevertheless mindful of the capacity constraints that confront countries in the region. It is in that connection that we call on the international community to support ongoing regional efforts. Thus far, France and the United States have deployed naval vessels to the area and are assisting with anti-piracy training. Such international initiatives, including efforts by the United Kingdom, are highly appreciated and must be encouraged. China has also recently offered funds to the Government of Benin to assist in its antipiracy efforts. I believe I speak for many affected countries when I say that we are willing to form strategic and lasting partnerships with international stakeholders to exchange information and technical know-how, mount surveillance and formulate interception techniques, all culminating in capacity-building.

There is no doubt that cooperative arrangements such as these will benefit enormously from the overall strategic assessment of the Secretary-General's intended mission to the region. We hope that the briefing today will provide the mission with the necessary focus to undertake this assignment. It is also expected that concrete proposals for United Nations support will emerge from the mission, capitalizing on the presence and activities of the United Nations Office for West Africa, the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

The need for concerted international effort to address the problem of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea cannot be overemphasized. The Council must therefore lend its support to regional efforts and, in so doing, eliminate the security challenge that affects not only the countries of the Gulf of Guinea but also international navigation.

Today, following this meeting, Nigeria will circulate a draft resolution that builds on the statement of 30 August. The draft resolution focuses on regional cooperation as the basis of the fight against piracy in the Gulf of Guinea and calls for firm, strategic and targeted international support for this demonstrable political will.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Benin.

**Mr. Zinsou** (Benin): As this is the first time that I take the floor, allow me, at the outset, to congratulate you, Madame President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council. The countries of the Gulf of Guinea, on behalf of which I speak, wish you full success during your presidency. Let me also commend your predecessor for his leadership in guiding the work of the Council during the month of September.

The States of the Gulf of Guinea are confronted with the resurgence of piracy and armed robbery along their coasts. In the recent months, the phenomenon has grown to worrying proportions on the coasts of those States.

This situation seriously affects the safety of maritime navigation and increases the level of transnational organized crime in the region. It is seriously affecting the ability of the States to meet their primary responsibility to protect people and goods in their territory and to secure safe traffic in their territorial waters. As such, the upsurge of piracy and armed robbery represent a serious threat to peace and security in the region, since it also has negative impacts on the economic performance of the States concerned and could destabilize them.

If left unaddressed, this situation could seriously jeopardize the tremendous investments made by the international community in both establishing durable peace and in fostering economic development in the subregion. It is not in the interest of the international community to tolerate the establishment off the coast of West and Central Africa of a zone of lawlessness breeding all kinds of illicit activities, including the smuggling of illegal immigrants, human trafficking, and the traffic in small arms and light weapons. These worrying occurrences at sea have also been accompanied by an increase of arms attacks on banks and trading centres in cities along the rivers, undermining the confidence of citizens in the ability of the States to protect their assets and their lives.

To tackle the problem, the States of the Gulf of Guinea have taken many initiatives, including joint patrols at sea, mainly between the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the Republic of Benin, the countries most affected. The Heads of States of the region are carrying on consultations with the intention of convening a summit for the consideration of a comprehensive response to the threat. In addition to these efforts, the Heads of States have also felt, quite rightly, the necessity to inform the wider international community, expecting its support in undertaking an effective fight against the phenomenon. In this regard, consultations and meetings have been held by the Permanent Representatives of the States of the Gulf of Guinea, and have been extended to all members of the African Group in August.

The efforts made and other initiatives taken by the Heads of State of the region and here in New York by the ambassadors have enjoyed an initial favourable response of the United Nations. Indeed, on 30 August the Security Council, briefed on the matter by Mr. Lynn Pascoe, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, issued a press statement (SC/10372) on the matter of piracy and maritime armed robbery in the Gulf of Guinea off the coast of West Africa.

In this regard, I would like, on behalf of the States of the region, to pay a sincere tribute to the Security Council for the promptness of its response, which, among other things, seriously strengthened the affected Member States in their efforts to find the best strategy against the threat. It was encouraging that, through the aforementioned press statement, the members of the Security Council expressed concern over the increase in piracy, maritime armed robbery and hostage-taking in the Gulf of Guinea and their damaging impact on security, trade and economic activities in the subregion.

Our Governments are galvanized by the recognition of the leadership role of the regional bodies and States on this issue and of the need for the international community to support affected countries, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Economic Community of Central African States and other relevant organizations, as appropriate, in securing international navigation along the Gulf of Guinea. We would like to encourage the Secretary-General to deploy a United Nations assessment mission to consider the situation and explore possible options for United Nations support for developing a comprehensive strategy to address this threat.

The countries of the Gulf of Guinea highly appreciate the readiness of the international community to provide the necessary support to strengthen the national and regional efforts deployed to tackle the problem of piracy and armed robbery in the Gulf of

Guinea. In this regard, we are of the view that the Security Council should consider going one step further by adopting a resolution on the issue in order to generate a clear mandate for all stakeholders to support the determination of our Governments to take decisive measures, individually and collectively, to restore maritime safety and the security of maritime navigation in the region.

We also believe that the adoption of such a resolution would send a strong signal to the pirates that the international community always remains united and strong in the fight against transboundary organized crime and terror wherever they occur. The States of the Gulf of Guinea suggest that, through such a resolution, the Council would offer them strong encouragement to step up their individual and collective efforts to overcome the scourge of piracy and armed robbery along their coasts, and strive to establish a common framework of action. We think that the Council could also pledge its full support and assistance to the establishment of such a regional framework, in liaison with the relevant regional organizations. It is well known that the implementation of such measures requires the mobilization of special expertise and material and financial resources for the development of strong capacities at national and regional levels.

In conclusion, I would like to reaffirm that the upsurge of piracy and armed robbery at sea in the Gulf of Guinea is a global challenge. It should not be left on the shoulders of the countries affected, even if they have demonstrated, as we have done, strong determination to take action against this phenomenon and their readiness to develop a regional framework to foster the coordination of their collective measures against it. In this sense, the States of the Gulf of Guinea expect a lot from the debate being held today. We are confident that the Security Council will assume its responsibility to act to strengthen peace and security in the subregion.

(*spoke in French*)

Having made this joint statement, I should like to make a few comments in my national capacity.

I pay tribute to the Secretary-General, ECOWAS and the Gulf of Guinea Commission for their significant contributions to this debate.

The capacity of States to maintain order and peace on their territory depends on their ability to fulfil their sovereign function of ensuring human security and the provision of public services. With the entrenchment of regional integration, the threat of inter-State conflict is now negligible, if not almost extinct. However, the threats coming from scourges such as maritime piracy and the wth in unlawful activities that threaten the security of States are also a genuine threat to international peace and security.

The upsurge in attacks against banks and peaceful citizens going about their productive activities in markets and the concomitant increase in attacks at sea against commercial shipping and oil tankers have led to a significant reduction in the number of ships that berth in the autonomous port of Cotonou. The risk of seeing the State of Benin and its young democracy stifled under the impact of these illicit activities is enormous. The autonomous port of Cotonou is the main source of customs income, which represents more than 55 per cent of the income funding the national budget, which depends essentially on tax revenues. There were genuine signs of this income being wiped out because of the unsafe reputation of the port due to the growth in unlawful activities off the coast of Benin.

Aware of the seriousness of the situation, the President of the Republic of Benin, His Excellency Mr. Boni Yayi, brought it to the permanent members of the Security Council and the Secretary-General. Since then, the Government of Benin has sought every means possible to combat and eliminate piracy off the coast of Benin.

Among the measures taken, I would like to mention here the repair and putting back into service of two patrol boats acquired by the Benin navy within the framework of cooperation with China, and the measures taken with Nigeria to conduct joint surveillance patrols in the territorial waters of Benin to make shipping activities safe. Since the launching of these joint patrols, there has been no instance of piracy.

Furthermore, Benin has decided to invest in strengthening maritime security and is taking measures to increase its logistical capacities for its navy by procuring new surveillance vessels, both maritime and aerial. By the beginning of next year, the Benin fleet will grow to six ships. Benin, through me, would like to thank all the development partners who are cooperating in building the capacity of our navy.

A year from now, the armed forces of Benin will be able to ensure security within its territorial waters

and to contribute more to efforts in the subregion to ensure, within the regional integration framework, the security of people and goods both on land and at sea. Clearly, the process of integrating naval forces and of establishing a regional framework for cooperation, in line with the maritime security strategy of the African Union, will develop along the line of sharing means and resources so that the States concerned assume ownership of their maritime territorial waters and, above all, so that an information exchange network can be developed and local expertise built up to ensure the effectiveness of individual and collective management of threats at sea.

The Government of Benin thanks the Security Council for sizing up the true scale of the threat represented by piracy and the growth of unlawful activities in the Gulf of Guinea, as it has demonstrated in this meeting. Benin is convinced that as the Council understands the global dimension of the problem, it will draw the appropriate conclusions to help the States of the region to effectively combat this threat to international peace and security.

Benin very much hopes that, through the adoption of a resolution on this issue under Chapter VIII of the Charter, the Security Council will establish a clear mandate for a determined commitment by the international community to support the efforts being made by countries in the region in order to establish coordinated and coherent efforts to combat organized transborder crime.

In this regard, we welcome the decision of the Secretary-General to send an integrated technical mission to Benin to examine the necessary forms of assistance. I would like to assure him of the full readiness of Benin to cooperate with the entire United Nations system to totally eliminate the scourge of piracy and unlawful activities off our coast.

**The President**: I thank the representative of Benin for his statement.

There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

*The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.*